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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHBL/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE 9795
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE 9956
INFO RUEADWW/ WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE 8891
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE 9350
BT
S E C R E T STATE 251200

EXDIS//BEIRUT FOR MCFARLANE

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, IS, LE, US
SUBJECT: MCFARLANE/FAIRBANKS MISSION: REPLY BY PRIME
MINISTER BEGIN TO PRESIDENT'S AUGUST 29 MESSAGE

REF: STATE 245988

1. SECRET ENTIRE TEXT

2. ISRAELI EMBASSY SEPTEMBER 1 DELIVERED PRIME MINISTER
BEGIN'S RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S AUGUST 29 MESSAGE
ASKING FOR FURTHER DELAY IN IDF REDEPLOYMENT FROM THE
SHUF. TEXT OF BEGIN'S LETTER FOLLOWS FYI.

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3. BEGIN TEXT

I THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER WHICH AMBASSADOR LEWIS DELIVERED TO ME IN THE EVENING OF AUGUST 29. I SHARE YOUR DEEP CONCERN THAT BLOOD SHOULD NOT BE SPLIT IN FRATRICIDAL STRUGGLES IN THE SHUF, AND I AM PARTICULARLY GRATIFIED THAT YOU REITERATE YOUR FULL SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAY 17 AGREEMENT, FOR WHICH, AS YOU RIGHTLY STATED, WE ALL LABORED SO HARD. THIS AGREEMENT FORMS A CORNERSTONE FOR THE FUTURE RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND LEBANON, AND THE LONGER PRESIDENT JEMAYEL

DELAYS ITS COMING INTO EFFECT, THE GREATER WILL BE THE DANGER OF A GROWING SYRIAN INFLUENCE IN LEBANON, WITH A CONCOMITANT WEAKENING OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT JEMAYEL.

4. YOU ASK US TO POSTPONE YET ONCE MORE THE REDEPLOYMENT OF OUR FORCES IN THE SHUF. I MUST SAY IN ALL FRANKNESS THAT THIS IS ASKING A GREAT DEAL FROM US: ALL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE REDEPLOYMENT HAVE BEEN COMPLETED AND OUR SOLDIERS ARE LIVING OFF BATTLE RATIONS OUT IN THE OPEN WAITING ONLY FOR THE ORDER TO MOVE. MOREOVER, WE HAVE, OVER THE PAST WEEKS OF INACTIVITY ON THE PART OF THE LEBANESE, BECOME SOMEWHAT SCEPTICAL, AND WE HAVE OUR DOUBTS WHETHER A POLITICAL AGREEMENT CAN INDEED BE REACHED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON AND THE DRUZE; THE SYRIANS CERTAINLY ARE DOING THEIR UTMOST TO PREVENT THAT FROM HAPPENING.

5. AS YOU KNOW BY NOW, WE HAD A GOOD DISCUSSION TODAY WITH YOUR VERY ABLE REPRESENTATIVE AMBASSADOR MCFARLANE. HE ASKED US TO POSTPONE OUR REDEPLOYMENT FOR A LIMITED TIME. HE UNDERSTOOD FULLY THE MILITARY DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN THIS REQUEST, AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT THERE WOULD BE NO FURTHER SIMILAR REQUESTS FOR MORE POSTPONEMENTS IF THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON FAILS TO REACH AN AGREEMENT. ON THAT BASIS, MY COLLEAGUES AND I DECIDED TO ORDER OUR FORCES TO STAY IN THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS UNTIL MIDNIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 3, AND THIS DESPITE THE DANGERS AND THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED.

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6. IT IS LESS THAN THE WEEK AMBASSADOR MCFARLANE SUGGESTED, BUT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE DATE SUGGESTED BY US FOR THE START OF THE EVACUATION IS CONNECTED WITH ROSH HASHANA.

7. WE HAVE BEEN AND ARE READY TO TURN OVER OUR POSITIONS TO THE LEBANESE ARMED FORCES. HOWEVER, I MUST STRESS THAT IF NO RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AND THE DRUZE IS REACHED THIS WOULD BECOME POSSIBLE ONLY BY USING FORCE AGAINST THE DRUZE, SOMETHING WE CANNOT DO.

8. I HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY AMBASSADOR MCFARLANE'S REPORT TO ME THIS MORNING. HOWEVER, AS TIME IS SHORT, I HOPE THAT PRESIDENT JEMAYEL AND HIS COLLEAGUES WILL USE THE REMAINING DAYS TO THE FULLEST IN ORDER TO PREVENT FURTHER BLOODSHED ON LEBANESE SOIL.

9. FINALLY, PLEASE ACCEPT MY HEARTFELT CONDOLENCES FOR THE TRAGIC DEATH OF THE TWO MARINES IN BEIRUT. LET US

HOPE THERE WILL BE NO MORE INNOCENT LIVES LOST IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES.

END TEXT

10. BEIRUT MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

SHULTZ

END OF MESSAGE

SECRET